

WASHINGTON – Calling it “a matter of fairness,” Congressman Spencer Bachus (R-Vestavia Hills) is proposing a legislative measure to help Alabama obtain more disaster relief aid from the federal government.

Bachus wants the state and its localities exempted from a requirement that forces them to come up with matching funds to qualify for certain federal disaster assistance offered in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. A bill approved by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Thursday grants such waivers to Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and Florida.

“Communities in Alabama need this aid, just as those in the other hard-hit Gulf States do, but some can’t afford to match it with their own scarce dollars,” Bachus said. “In light of yesterday’s tornadoes, Alabama’s limited resources will be even further taxed and that makes this request even more urgent.”

Bachus plans to offer a floor amendment to H.R. 1144, the Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Match Relief Act of 2007. The language would add Alabama to the list of states receiving an exception from the matching share requirements of the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

“The money will help our state and local officials speed up Alabama’s recovery from devastating storm damage,” Bachus said.

Bachus will seek permission from the Rules Committee to offer his amendment when the overall legislation is brought to the full House for a

vote. A date for consideration has not yet been set.

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